



Connect (5 to 10 minutes)

Come together to build relationships through fellowship and sharing about this week's worship.

- Take a few minutes to share your thoughts about worship this week.
 - What aspects of worship did or did not connect with you?
 - What story or illustration made an impact on you?
- What is the most helpful piece of advice you have ever received?

Context (30 to 40 minutes)

Dig deeper into the videos and scripture for this week through questions and discussion.

- If you read 1 Peter chapter 3 this week, share something that you connected with or any questions that came up because of your reading.

Watch the video for this session on your DVD or online.

- Do you agree with the idea that our reason, tradition, and experience are gifts that help us to read scripture? Why or why not?
 - Share about a time when an experience you had changed the way you understand a passage in scripture.
 - Share about a time when reading scripture helped you to understand an experience in a different way.
- How do you respond to Allison's comments about this chapter being more difficult to read as modern people? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
 - Share about other passages of scripture you find difficult to read or understand their meaning for us today.
 - How have you previously worked through these more challenging parts of the Bible?
- When have you attempted to make large or significant changes all at once, trying to remove all the imperfections in one fell swoop? How did that work for you?
 - How do you respond to the idea that we more often are called to siphon off smaller imperfections over time (in our lives and in the world)?
- Rather than looking for times when you have had "perfect" faith, where do you see that you have developed a stronger faith in the past six months? Year? Five years? Where do you see periods of stagnation in your faith over these same time periods?
 - Where are you seeing a purification or refining in your life right now?
 - Where are you seeing a purification or refining in your larger community or the world?

Read 1 Peter 3:1-4

Wives who are married to non-Christian husbands might have been tempted to argue, debate, or lecture them into conversion. This scripture is suggesting an alternative way to share their faith in a world where they have minimal influence and power to help their families convert to Christianity

- After hearing a fuller context for this scripture, how might your understanding of this passage have changed? How is your faith impacted by this?
 - This is meant to be practical advice as well as spiritual. When have you received this same kind of advice? How did you change your behavior or thinking because of it?
- Share about times when you have been tempted to win someone over to Christ with words.
 - How effective was this method of sharing? What did you learn in the process?
 - How can these words from 1 Peter apply to your relationships with others?
- Share about a time when your behavior has influenced someone in their faith.
 - How effective was this method of sharing? What did you learn in the process?

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12

Remember that in these passages, the writer of 1 Peter is encouraging wives and slaves to be rebellious against the overall patriarchal culture, which dictated that entire households must follow the faith of the *paterfamilias*, or male head of the household. At the same time, the writer is instructing them how to continue living in an imperfect world without bringing more suffering on themselves.

- In reading this passage, where do you see the author of 1 Peter encouraging us to be rebellious against our culture?
 - Do you feel comfortable with the idea of living counter-culturally? Why or why not?
 - What is the most challenging part of living counter-culturally for you?

Call (10 minutes)

We believe that God not only shows us who God is but invites us to participate in God's ministry by answering unique calls in our own lives. Join together in discovering how we can actively respond to scripture and God's presence.

- Rather than giving into the temptation of trying to change every imperfect part of our lives all at once, take a moment to choose one specific area that you could allow God to purify.
 - What would this part of your life look like if this change took place? How would it impact the rest of your life?

Closing (5 minutes)

God calls us into community by sharing our joys and concerns together in prayer and supporting one another in our walks with Christ. As we share testimony and stories of our lives, let us listen to where God is working within our community and how we can build each other up in Christian love.

- Share joys and concerns with one another.
- Close in prayer, either by inviting a group member to pray or by using the prayer provided below.

Closing Prayer

Loving God, so often we become overwhelmed by the many different places we need Your purifying grace to change us. We focus on too many things at one time, and we are discouraged when we do not make the progress we hoped for. Help us to be reminded again that You heal us of our sins, not that we heal ourselves. Help us this week to focus on one area of our lives, and enable us to offer it up to You for guidance and help. Amen.